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Restoring Confidence

THE appointment of Deputy Commissioner C. E. Rivett-Carnac to the top post in the RCMP, announced at Ottawa yesterday, comes as a welcome development in a situation which was causing considerable public concern. The choice was announced in terms of finality by Justice Minister Fulton, from which it can be inferred that the government intends to go through with the move on April 1. Simultaneously that disposes of the issue as to whether the commissionership would be filled by promotion from within or outside of the service. Commissioner-designate Rivett-Carnac has given 35 years of his life to the RCMP, served in every division of it and is one of its most highly trained and respected officers.

The filling of the post in this manner can be considered a wise step on the part of the cabinet, because it will restore confidence in the administration of Canada's famous police body. It does not, however, settle the blame that the government will face over the antecedent developments. Why was former Commissioner L. H. Nicholson put in the middle between the divergent views of the Newfoundland and Dominion administrations over labor differences in that province? His voluntary resignation resulted, and there is still no word as to why this was accepted in the light of attending circumstances. At the same time the RCMP could not be left leaderless, and in Mr. Rivett-Carnac the force itself now has some assurance that all of the rules are not to be thrown overboard, to suit political or other convenience.

In Victoria and British Columbia generally, the elevation of Deputy Commissioner Rivett-Carnac, who was on the point of retirement this month at the age of 57, will be welcomed warmly on personal grounds. This officer served at the head of the B.C. division of the force between 1949 and 1956, and made a legion of friends in official and private circles. Not one of them will doubt his capacity or success in handling the greatest responsibility in the service of the RCMP. A professional policeman for three and a half decades, and an active service war veteran before that, Mr. Rivett-Carnac has much to bring to the execution of his new duties.

Timely Warning

THE time to head-off calamities is before they have a chance of happening. Magistrate William Ostler's admonition to a youth in the Saanich police court against careless discharge of small arms in a thickly settled area is an instance in point. A good many households, not only in Saanich but also throughout the environs of semi-urban Victoria in all directions, have been concerned over the growing use of small bore rifles in more or less indiscriminate fashion. The thing fired upon under such circumstances is not always the end of the story.

A .22 rifle ball will carry 1,000 yards or more under some of the powder charges in use today. It is hard to find that distance now anywhere on a map of Greater Victoria without encountering settlement. A shot which started out in a small boy's aim at a paper target may end up by glancing from a stone and ricocheting through a living room window, with plenty of steam behind it at the end of the journey. That is leaving too much to chance the potential mischief which could follow.

There is no need to elaborate on the hazards. Statute law and municipal bylaws both enjoin against the discharge of firearms of any nature within settled limits. There is neither guesswork nor equivocation about that. If outside of the law the practice continues, it is directly at the risk of those concerned. That is where parents come in. The temptation on a boy to test a new small bore rifle, and the seeming harmlessness of a shot at a target set up against some natural bulwark, cannot be overlooked. It is for parents, or other guardians, to see that temptation does not win out. Luck has a nasty habit of breaking against chance-taking in such circumstances.

Every healthy boy should be made familiar with firearms when he is old enough for that. There are safe and legal ways of doing so, and in a region of some 125,000 people they must be rigidly adhered to.

A Provincial Flag

A REPRESENTATIVE flag being such a continuing live subject in the federal realm, it is interesting to note passage by the Legislature of a resolution to adopt one for provincial use. It will be left to the government to develop the idea.

The impulse undoubtedly stems from the centennial flag which proved such a success last year, drawing as it did specific attention to B.C. It is this flag in fact which is recommended for official use after required changes have been made. Presumably it would fly over all provincial public buildings, just as the Red Ensign flies over federal buildings.

If and when it does, one hopes some attention will be paid to flag etiquette; for example that the emblem comes down when the sun sets. Nothing looks more forlorn or more disregarded than a flag flying all through the night. If a flag is worth proclaiming as a symbol it is worth respectful care in its use.

This province will join Quebec and Nova Scotia if it proceeds with the idea. At the moment these are the only two provinces which have a flag of their own, and in their case a provincial flag is an old story. Having passed its 100th birthday it is not inappropriate that B.C. should now consider itself qualified to sport a distinctive emblem for its own official purposes. There need be no conflict with the federal flag.

Recalling the dispute which ranges when designs are submitted for a new Canadian flag, the provincial government should have the courage to decide on the design and then say: "This is it." If it toys with the notion of seeking public advice it will be so flooded with suggestions and counter suggestions there never will be a provincial flag. No federal government has ever been bold in such a matter, but there are fewer inhibitions here.

Interpreting the News

Ultimatum Fading?

By ED SIMON
Canadian Press Staff Writer

IN an episode that would have done credit to Lewis Carroll, Nikita Khrushchev has waved his hand over a Russian ultimatum to the West and transformed it into a Western invitation to the East.

To those attending the Russian premier's Kremlin press conference, it must have sounded like something straight out of Alice in Wonderland.

The ultimatum that Khrushchev said wasn't an ultimatum was last November's demand for the withdrawal of Western forces from West Berlin by May 27.

The invitation that the Soviet premier blandly accepted without waiting for it to be offered concerned a meeting of foreign ministers on May 11.

The conciliatory tone of Khrushchev's remarks, if it lasts, might well bring about a foreign ministers' conference on the specified date, if agreement can be reached on the unsettled question of the presence of Czech and Polish representatives at the talks.

If the ministers get together, progress may or may not be made on the questions of Berlin and a German peace treaty. Their success is likely to determine whether a summit conference will follow.

In effect, Khrushchev's mention of a date was the only step forward. The remainder of his remarks, even his denial that his "get out of Berlin" statement of last November constituted an ultimatum, had all been said before.

His "concession" of the right of the Western powers to keep troops in West Berlin conceded nothing more than the validity of agreements between Russia and the West at the end of the Second World War. And he has not abandoned—merely postponed his intention to give Communist East Germany control of the Berlin approaches if no agreement is signed with the West.

Yet, if an isolated display of amiability by Khrushchev, taken by itself, does not herald the dawn of a new and more peaceful era, he has gone some distance toward making amends for his treatment of Prime Minister Macmillan three weeks ago.

Khrushchev's blistering attack on the West during Macmillan's Russian visit took a good deal of the bloom off the Briton's diplomatic venture. But the new Russian line augurs well for the success of his current talks with President Eisenhower, whom he is trying to persuade to make a new approach to bridge the East-West gap.

"We're cleverly fooling the Russians by acting as if our country were bankrupt"

Thinking Aloud

". . . of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—of cabbages and kings."

By TOM TAYLOR

THE editor of Maclean's told a Vancouver audience last week that militarily Canada is an obsolete nation, and so we should quit defence spending and seek peace through foreign aid measures.

The RCN won't like this notion, not believing itself obsolete. The presumption is that there can be no war except a nuclear one. Supposing there was, we might regret being so precipitate.

The Maclean's editor was cheered to the echo, however, and for good reason. Nobody wants a war and there is great emotional reaction to the idea of peace.

We could do as he says, too. No worthwhile nation has ever before thrown up the sponge and refused to try and defend its own soil. Even those legendary neutralists, the Swiss, have always had military forces. But precedents can be set.

* * *

We could afford the gesture. Australia couldn't, nuclear war or no nuclear war, for it is out on its ownsome in the wide Pacific, but we are more secure. We have a Big Brother just across the line who would come at once to our rescue if there was military need.

There might be some doubt, though, that this policy would win friends and influence people. It is unfortunate but true that the nations with the most say at the UN are those with the big battalions. If this were not so the UN would have brought peace to the world long ago.

Helplessness might not captivate the imagination as we think it would. We might simply be totally disregarded and our gesture made for nil.

If as Mr. Allen says Canada has only won world regard because it fought well in two wars—although personally I had hoped we were otherwise respected as well—there is the chance our good name would disappear altogether if we weren't prepared to fight any more for our own defence, and thus for anybody else's either.

* * *

Leaving aside the ethics of just trying to buy peace by giving away money, foreign aid doesn't always work out as expected. It doesn't necessarily bring gratitude or persuade the recipient to the donor's point of view, as recent history has illustrated. A Canadian gesture of the kind mooted could go for nought.

Then there is one practical drawback to the idea of scrapping all weapons and spending defence monies in foreign aid, that can't be ignored. If Canada's two-billion defence budget were wiped out the Canadian people would immediately demand a large cut in their taxes. And the lovers of peace would be among them.

That wouldn't leave this money to be expended as an emissary for peace.

The trouble with effective disarmament is that both sides to the present cold war would have to disarm at the same time. Canada is not a world power, it sits within easy reach of a large and strong ally, and so we can perhaps view helplessness with complacency.

But how would we react if tomorrow the USA adopted Mr. Allen's idea for itself—without Russia doing likewise?

I don't think we'd like it. Foreign aid instead of arms wouldn't then sound so attractive.

Gerald Waring

Reports from Ottawa

THE federal cabinet has not, at this writing, decided whether to outlaw the anti-union legislation passed by the Newfoundland House of Assembly on March 6. Whether it will can only be a guess.

This despite the strong condemnation in the Commons by Prime Minister Diefenbaker and Justice Minister Fulton of the actions of Premier Joey Smallwood. The PM and Fulton didn't specifically refer to the anti-union laws, but undoubtedly these laws largely prompted their perhaps unprecedented censure of Smallwood.

However, the government has to consider all the factors and implications in its decision on disallowance. Some factors are far-reaching and of the greatest national importance. And this against the salient fact that no action by Ottawa can now remedy the injustice done to the International Woodworkers Union.

Joey has outfoxed Ottawa. Immediately on passage of the anti-union laws, Fulton had instructions sent to Lieutenant-Governor C. L. MacPherson of Newfoundland requiring him forthwith to forward authenticated copies of the legislation to the secretary of state in Ottawa.

"Forthwith" seems to have been rather loosely interpreted in St. John's. Secretary of State Courtemanche didn't receive the official copies until last Monday week. In the interim Smallwood acted quickly to make use of the legislation before Ottawa had a chance to disallow it. He had the IWA's certification as bargaining agent for the loggers transferred to his "independent" Newfoundland Brotherhood of Woodsworkers. Then the "independent" union which Joey fathered signed a work and wages contract with the strike-bound Anglo-Newfoundland Development Corp.

Even if Ottawa disallows the legislation under which these actions were taken, the IWA would not get back its certification as the loggers' bargaining agent. The allocation of certification to Joey's union, and that union's subsequent contract with the AND Corp., would remain valid.

* * *

The federal government's power of disallowance is good for a year from the date of passage of the provincial law in question. Moreover, it is customary for the federal government to give a province an opportunity to amend or repeal its legislation as an alternative to disallowance.

Before acting, the government must also consider:

1. Relations with the provinces generally, inasmuch as disallowance of provincial labor legislation would be an interference with the provinces' jealously guarded autonomy in their constitutional fields.

2. Whether disllowance of the Newfoundland laws would create a precedent so binding that the government could not consistently reject labor's demands that Ottawa disallow new British Columbia laws which seem to infringe on labor's right to carry on peaceful picketing, and contain other provisions to which labor objects vehemently.

3. The danger of making Newfoundlanders feel isolated from and discriminated against by the rest of Canada, as many Quebeckers have felt in the past—a feeling which would at least weaken the recently-tied bonds of Canada-Newfoundland union, and might cause not a few Newfoundlanders to want to separate from Canada.

On the other hand, there is the blatant injustice of Joey's laws, the political pressure of labor for their disallowance, the likelihood that failure to act would be a poor augury for Diefenbaker's new Bill of Rights, and the politically-intriguing opportunity to widen the breach between Newfoundland and mainland Liberals.

The Packsack

Cosy and Homelike

By GREGORY CLARK

AT the hotel desk, I overheard a man speaking to the room clerk.

"Can I have a radio in my room, please?"

"There's a TV in every room, sir," said the clerk. "Free of charge." Said the guest, "but you only have three channels. I want a radio, so I can have a little choice of entertainment."

"Very good, sir," said the clerk, a little taken aback. "I'll have one sent up right away . . ."

The guest, seeing my intrest, took me into his confidence.

"I'm just in from a hard day's business," he said. "I don't want to be entertained. I want to rest. I don't want a series of programs taking me over. I want to choose a little soft music to go with my reading the paper for an hour. I want to pick up a news broadcast around nine, ten. I want to snooze on the bed for an hour before bedtime, listening to some jokes, uttered in a quiet voice, not projected at me, with lights, like a sputnik. I want to be able to grope around among twenty, thirty programs . . ."

When I got up to my room, I found the TV programs were a murder mystery, a western, and a local show featuring local talent.

I called the desk. "Send up a radio."

On the radio, by golly, I got my familiar home-town station, with all the local news, and a little quiet music spun by a disk jockey who is a friend of mine.

It was very cosy and home-like.

The Devils

MR. Robert M. Hutchins, a former president of the University of Chicago and now the president of the Fund for the Republic, asks this provocative question: "If we weren't getting ahead of Russia, or falling behind her, how could we tell where we were?" Russia, he points out, plays a curious role in American aspirations: she is both "the devil in our world and the standard by which we measure our progress."

If Americans have this devil, Canadians have at least two. For it appears to us that the United States, benignly of course, plays almost the same role. How often do we not measure our progress by American standards and at the same time berate the United States as the bete noire to a "pure" Canadian spirit.

Both nations might be the better for putting their devils behind them.

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Washington Angle

Allies Also Do Their Bit

By DAVID LAWRENCE

IF the American people could express in a single sentence their most important wish today, it would be: "Keep us out of war at any cost."

Yet, when out of a national budget of 77 billion dollars, the president asks for $3,930,000,000 to keep American boys from fighting abroad, and calls for a "mutual security program" to bolster our allies, this is derided as a "foreign aid" program or a "give-away."

Few of the critics realize the explosive situation that exists in the world today or how interrelated America's fate is with the other free countries—or, if they do realize it, they fail to see how many billions more our defences would cost if America had to do the job alone. That's why President Eisenhower's television address Monday night was so important to the country.

For the president had no sooner announced last week that he was asking Congress for $3,930,000,000 when from Capitol Hill—mostly from Democrats—came predictions that the expenditure would be cut by a billion. Acting Secretary of State Herter promptly said that if any such reduction were made it would "serve notice on the world that we are weakening in our determination."

* * *

Just why some of the legislators regard any money spent abroad as either a gift or a throw-away is hard to understand, unless they think the American people really can be misled by such distortions. Certainly, as sometimes charged, there's waste in the spending of American funds in other countries because the United States cannot always control how other governments disburse the money they receive. But, conceding that there is some waste, it is a fact that in war itself there is even greater waste. The true test is whether, on the whole, war is prevented, and thus far the United States has managed with the help of strong allies to keep us out of a third world war.

It sometimes isn't realized how much America's own allies have been spending since the close of the Second World War. Rather the impression is fostered by the critics that the United States is putting up all the money for international defence or mutual security. The president in his message a few days ago to Congress said:

"Over the years of our combined effort, these allies and friends have spent on these forces some $141 billion, more than six times the $22 billion we have contributed in military assistance. During the calendar year 1958 they contributed $19 billion of their own funds to the support of these forces. . . .

"Without the strength of our allies our nation would be turned into an armed camp and our people subjected to a heavy draft and an annual cost of many billions of dollars above our present military budget."

What perhaps isn't generally understood in America is that economic assistance plays a vital role in maintaining the stability of other nations. If there were no stable governments among our allies America would not have strategic bases overseas. The president said on this point:

* * *

"Through the mutual security program our friends among the free world nations make available to us for the use of our forces some 250 bases in the most strategic locations, many of them of vital importance. They support ground forces totaling more than 5 million men stationed at points where danger of local aggression is most acute, based on their own soil and prepared to defend their own homes. They man air forces of about 30,000 aircraft of which nearly 14,000 are jets, 23 times the jet strength of 1950 when the program started. They also have naval forces totaling 2,500 combat vessels with some 1,700 in active fleets or their supporting activities."

Dissenting members of Congress often concede that the military program is logical but they claim the economic support abroad is questionable and this they would cut. In doing so they would strike a blow at the morale of the countries affected. For without economic stability, political chaos ensues, and then the Communists find fertile ground for exploitation or even overthrow of existing governments. The Communist intrusion in Iraq lately, for example, has unsettled the entire Middle East. The Communist tactics in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been supported by Soviet measures in the economic field.

So it's a dangerous international situation which calls for American expenditures to bolster here and abroad our defences—politically, economically and militarily. From a strong alliance, moreover, comes firmness in a crisis as is the case today when Moscow is testing the West. The President says the West will not surrender.

He can say this convincingly because the Western alliance in the last ten years has been built on a strong foundation. It is to maintain that strength that the "mutual security program," or what might better be called a "keep-us-out-of-war" program, is really directed.